

## **REMARKS**

The Applicant has carefully reviewed and considered the Examiner's Office Action dated August 29, 2006. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the following comments.

By this Amendment, independent claims 34-35, 43-44, 52-53, 61-62 and 118 are amended. Accordingly, Claims 34-120 are pending in the present application.

Claims 34-37, 42-46, 49-50, 52-55, 58-59, 61-62 and 66-117 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,901,224 to Hecht in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,875,249 to Mintzer et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Mintzer") for the reasons set forth in the paragraph 6 spanning pages 2-9 of the Action. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The claimed invention is directed to the following embodiments: an image verifying method or an image processing system that can prevent an image from being tampered by embedding a digital watermark (e.g., claims 34-42, 61-69, 118-120); an image providing apparatus that acquires document information which indicates a document format of an image to be processed from at least a part of the image, defines a location information indicating at least one region of the image, in which region a digital watermark is embedded based on the document information, and provides the image having the region in which the digital watermark is embedded (e.g., claims 43, 45, 47-49, 51); an image providing apparatus including format recognizing means that acquires document information which indicates a document format of an image to be processed from at least a part of the image, and recognizes a format for indicating at least one region of the image, in which region a digital watermark is embedded based on the

document information, and provides the image having the region in which the digital watermark is embedded (e.g., claims 44-46, 50); and a recording medium storing a program to be executed by a computer that acquires document information, defines a location information or recognizes a format for indicating at least one region of the image, in which region a digital watermark is embedded based on the information and provides the image having the region in which the digital watermark is embedded (e.g., claims 52-60).

Neither Hecht nor Mintzer is directed to such an operation. Further, none of the cited references of record teach or suggest any of the above operations which acquire document information, define a location information or recognize a format indicating at least one region of the image, in which region a digital watermark is embedded based on the document information and provide the image having the region in which the digital watermark is embedded.

The Examiner recognizing that the primary reference to Hecht fails to disclose the recited feature of “wherein said document information shows an identification of a document classification” applied the secondary reference to Mintzer. By the foregoing amendments, the independent claims were amended to clarify that the recited “document classification” actually refers to “document format”. Figure 27 of the present application illustrates an embodiment where a form X has regions R1-R3 in which a digital watermark is embedded. The information shown in R4 of Figure 27 of the present application corresponds to document information that indicates the document format. In addition, the independent claims were amended to recite “a document format database”. Neither Hecht nor Mintzer disclose, teach or suggest the recited “document format

database” which manages information of the region where the digital watermark is embedded so that the information can be retrieved by using the document information. Consequently, no combination of Hecht and Mintzer can render the claimed invention unpatentable and withdrawal of that rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 118-120 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hecht in view of Mintzer in further view of official notice as explained in paragraph 7 spanning pages 9-13 of the Action. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner acknowledges that Hecht and Mintzer do not explicitly teach the recited document format database. Instead, the Examiner relies upon official notice “that all databases manage information in [Hecht] col. 6, lines 21-25”. However, what Hecht discloses is that “data input 44 provides external data to a control unit 36 ...”. Nowhere does Hecht disclose, let alone teach or suggest that “all databases manage information”, let alone the information of the region where a watermark is embedded as recited in the claimed invention so that the information can be retrieved by using the document information. It is submitted that there is no motivation for modifying Hecht, let alone the combination of Hecht and Mintzer to include the recited document format database as none of the references of record address such a feature. Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 118-120 are not rendered obvious by Hecht in view of Mintzer and further in view of official notice and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

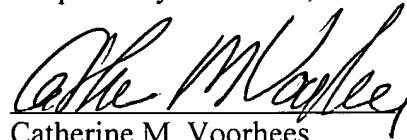
Claims 38-41, 47, 48, 51, 56-67, 60 and 63-65 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hecht in view of Mintzer and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,504,941 to Wong for the reasons set forth in the paragraph 8 spanning pages 2-9 of the Action. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 38-41, 47-48, 51, 56-57, 60 and 63-65 depend from independent claims 34, 43, 52 and 61. Wong does not disclose the features missing from any combination of Hecht and Mintzer, as argued above. Thus, the above-identified dependent claims are at least patentable over the art of record for the reasons described above in addition to the features recited in each respective dependent claim. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) of the above-identified dependent claims is requested.

For the above stated reasons, it is submitted that all of the claims are allowable over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that this Amendment After Final Rejection places the application in condition for allowance; does not raise new issues that require further consideration and/or search; and do not raise the issue of new matter. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully request that this Amendment After Final Rejection be entered and that this application be passed to issuance.

Should the Examiner believe that a conference would advance the prosecution of this application, he is encouraged to telephone the undersigned counsel to arrange such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine M. Voorhees  
Registration No. 33,074  
VENABLE LLP  
P.O. Box 34385  
Washington, DC 20043-9998  
Telephone: (202) 962-4800  
Telefax: (202) 962-8300

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